

October 4, 1968

Mr. John B. Rutherford  
Rutherford & Chekene  
259 Geary Street, Room 406  
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Rutherford:

Thank you for your letter of September 26 inviting me to join a preliminary organizing group for "Scientists and Engineers for Cranston".

I was pleased to see and do endorse the statement that accompanied your letter. I will join the list of sponsors, as you request, but I wish to state the following condition as explicitly and as forcefully as I know how.

There is, as you know, a very large group of voters who are deeply aggrieved that the political process has not generated a range of choices that gives us a chance to voice our preferences with the precision to which we are accustomed in our work as scientists and engineers. This is perhaps inevitable in politics, but I believe that some recognition of this principle is essential for the honest recruitment of support for our candidate, and it may also be more effective than some of your experts might recommend. I have in mind that a great many voters will stay at home if the campaign is constructed on such premises that a vote for Cranston is construed as an enthusiastic endorsement of the ablest thinker and most profound statesman that California could produce. But if we concentrate on that kind of finesse and stay home, we will accomplish nothing but the election of Rafferty. I therefore suggest that this group of Cranston supporters, above all others, be relieved of the necessity to make positive endorsements that go beyond their convictions, and that instead we concentrate on the ~~them~~ that the practical choice before us is Rafferty or Cranston. Neither of them is perfect. Which one do you want?

If the further literature from this group conforms to this standard I will be very happy to work for it. I realize that this may not be the most flattering to Mr. Cranston's ego, but it may end up being the best way to get him elected.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics